



Montana Department of **LABOR & INDUSTRY**

State Workforce Investment Board

A proud partner of the

americanjobcenter
network

Executive Committee Minutes

1:30 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**Go-To Meeting, 1st Floor Conference Room, Walt Sullivan Building
Helena, Montana
July 31, 2013**

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Marty Copps, Chair; Dave Crum, Vice Chair; Mike McGinley; Dore Schwinden (Pam Bucy Designee); and John Rogers

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT: Mike Grove

STAFF: Leisa Smith, and Chris Wilhelm

GUESTS: Pam Watson, Suzanne Ferguson, and Rhonda Huseby

Welcome and Introductions

Chair Marty Copps called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m. She welcomed Committee members and guests. Leisa welcomed new member, John Rogers.

Roll call

Leisa Smith conducted roll call and established a quorum

Agenda

Chair Copps reviewed the Agenda and asked for a consensus to approve it. Mr. Crum moved to approve the agenda as presented. The motion carried.

Minutes

Chair Copps reviewed past meeting minutes from May 29, 2013. No changes or additions were made. Mr. Crum moved to approve the minutes as presented, and Mr. McGinley seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

I. OJT Waiver: Limits on Employer Reimbursement

The Workforce Investment Act Unit Supervisor, Suzanne Ferguson, presented a brief overview of the recent National Emergency Grants Montana has received. The state was awarded a National Emergency Grant (NEG) for On-the-Job Training (OJT) on June 30, 2010. The grant, in the amount of \$889,009, was to provide On-the-Job Training to the long-term unemployed (defined

as being out of work for 22 weeks). Job Service regions 1, 2, and 4 were the service delivery areas for the grant. The grant was originally funded with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds, and had a sliding scale for wage reimbursement for the employer:

- Up to 90%: Employers with 50 or fewer employees
- Up to 75%: Employers with 51-250 employees
- Up to 50%: Employers with more than 250 employees

In June 2012, Montana was awarded an additional \$1,265,000 to continue with the program, due to the success the state was experiencing. The second allocation of money was not ARRA funds but from the US Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration. The grant will be in operation until June 30, 2014. Montana expects to serve 145 participants in total with this grant. As of July 31, 2013, the Department has enrolled 129 participants and expects to hit the enrollment goal and spend all of the funds.

Ms. Ferguson explained the purpose of the requested OJT Waiver is to extend the sliding scale wage reimbursement rate to the other WIA programs; Adult, Youth and Dislocated Worker. In the Workforce Investment Act, wage reimbursement to employers for On-The-Job Training is set at “up to 50%”. The intent is to maximize the flexibility needed to ensure speedy implementation of formula and discretionary grants; increase business usage of the workforce system; create additional opportunities for new workers, and for unemployed and underemployed workers to speed their return to full-time employment; reduce the length of time for a Unemployment Insurance (UI) claim, and reduce the need for usage of other public assistance benefits. Targeted populations are unemployed and underemployed workers who do not have transferable or marketable skills; individuals entering the workforce for the first time; hard-to-serve, low-income youth who are unable to compete for limited job openings; and businesses needing to hire additional workers to sustain their productivity, who do not have the resources to do so.

The proposal has been posted to the SWIB website for a 15 day public comment period. No public comment was received.

Two brief news videos were viewed that talked about the success of the OJT grant program. One video featured a new Montana employer who has subsequently hired 16 employees for his new business and the second video was a clip featuring then US DOL Assistant Secretary Jane Oats who came to Missoula to praise Montana’s success of the program

Mr. Crum moved to approve submission to the OJT waiver regarding Limits on Employer Reimbursements to the US Department of Labor; Mr. Rogers seconded. The motion carried unanimously. Staff will keep the State Board posted on the Waiver’s progress.

II. Next Steps

Ms. Smith advised members that Board appointments are still pending from the Governor’s Office, and that current membership will continue to serve until new appointments are made. She requested members submit suggestions to the Governor’s office for people who may be interested

in serving on any board or council. The Youth Council will also be needing new appointments due to a number of retirements.

SWIB orientation and strategic planning is tentatively scheduled for late October or early November.

With no further discussion Chair Copps adjourned the meeting at 1:53 p.m.

DRAFT